

REMARKS

Claims 26, 27, and 29-46 are presented for consideration. Claims 26, 36-39, and 41 are independent.

Claims 26, 36, 37, and 39 have been amended. Support for the amendments can be found throughout the original specification as filed. Claim 46 is newly presented. No new matter has been added.

Applicants respectfully traverse the restriction requirement and election of species requirement as set forth in the Office Action, mailed March 30, 2010, in light of the following remarks.

The Office Action contends that the identified groups (I, II and III) and identified species (A and B) are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept.

The claims currently pending were previously rejected in the Office Action dated March 19, 2009. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner, having already conducted a search of the prior art, considered the applicability of the prior art, and applied the prior art in the outstanding rejections, would not be seriously burdened by reconsidering those rejections in light of the above amendments and the Applicants' remarks contained in the Request for Reconsideration dated September 21, 2009.

Furthermore, because of the Examiner's familiarity with the subject application and the prior art as a result of previously issuing two Office Actions in the subject application, dated

August 21, 2008 and March 19, 2009, Applicants submit that the amount effort required by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office would be lessened by permitting all of the claims presently in the application to be prosecuted in a single application. The alternative is to proceed with the filing of an additional application, consisting of the same disclosure, and being subject to substantially the same search, perhaps by a different Examiner on a different occasion, with the resultant burden on the Patent and Trademark Office.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner reconsider the requirement for restriction and election of species and allow the claims as presently in the application to be prosecuted in a single application.

Nevertheless, in order to comply with the requirements of 37 C.F.R. § 1.143, Applicants provisionally elect the claims of Group I, namely Claims 26, 27, 29-37, 39-40, and 46, and Species A, the First Embodiment, namely Figure 3. It is submitted that Claims 26, 27, 29-37, 39 and 40 read on Species A.

Applicants submit that at least for the reasons discussed in the Request for Reconsideration, dated September 21, 2009, the present invention as set forth in the independent claims is patentable over the applied references. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections is respectfully requested. Due consideration and prompt passage to issue are also respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

/Scott D. Malpede/

Scott D. Malpede
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 32,533

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
1290 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10104-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

SDM/PHH:ayr

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